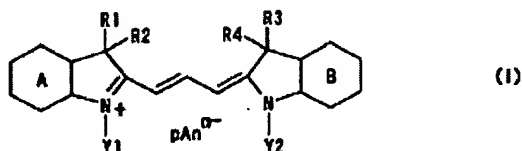


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A cyanine compound represented by general formula (I):



wherein ring A and ring B each represent a benzene or naphthalene ring that may be substituted; at least one of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups, and the other paired groups each represent an alkyl group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to each other to form a 3- to 6-membered ring; Y1 and Y2 each represent an organic group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms; An^{m-} represents an m-valent anion; m represents an integer 1 or 2; and p represents a coefficient for maintaining the charge neutrality.

2. (original) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein each of R1, R2, R3, and R4 is a benzyl group.

3. (original) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein ring A and/or ring B constituting the heterocyclic ring with the adjacent two benzyl groups is a naphthalene ring.

4. (original) An optical recording material containing the

cyanine compound of claim 1, the optical recording material being adapted to be used in an optical recording layer formed on a substrate to make an optical recording medium.

5. (currently amended) An optical recording medium comprising a substrate and a thin film of the optical recording material of claim ~~1~~ 4 on the substrate.